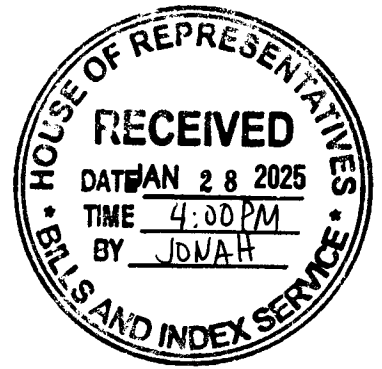


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

House Bill No. **11365**



Introduced by Representative Marjorie Ann "Maan" A. Teodoro

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to prevent and penalize the crime of bullying experienced by children within their communities in the country.

According to the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), the Philippines ranked number 1 amongst 70 countries as the "most problematic" country in the world in terms of bullying; Amongst the 70 countries included the United States of America (USA), United Kingdom (UK), Korea, Japan, France, and more. In 2016, the Council for the Welfare of Children shared the National Baseline Survey on Violence Against Children, conducted amongst children aged 13 to 17 years old, stating that 65% of Filipino students, mostly female students, have experienced some form or kind of bullying at least a few times in a month while 40% of Filipino students were bullied more frequently (once or twice a week).

Unfortunately, children experienced bullying because of their physical appearance, mostly one's skin color, and their status in life. The Department of Education (DepEd) has shared that in the School Year 2023-2024, more than 1,700 students attempted to commit suicide and 254 students committed suicide. Of that number, 113 were junior high students and 61 were senior high students.

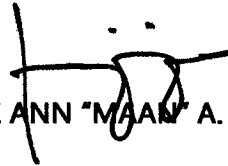
In 2023, during the International Day Against Violence and Bullying at School Including Cyberbullying, UNESCO shared that a child's mental health is triggered and peaks at school, which affects a child's school performance. Unfortunately, only 29% of the victims' parents gave attention to the issue.

Despite the enactment of Republic Act No. 10627 or the "Anti-Bullying Act" which aims to protect students from bullying within educational institutions through the adoption of anti-bullying policies, implementation of mechanisms to address bullying, and providing sanctions to educational institutions who fails to comply with the law, there is still an increasing rate of

bullying in the Philippines. This, thus, raises the question if bullying is being normalized in the country?

Therefore, this bill aims to not only define bullying but now penalize offenders, especially to those who acted with discernment.

In view of the foregoing, this bill is earnestly sought for.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Maan', is written over the printed name.

MARJORIE ANN "MAAN" A. TEODORO

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House Bill No. **11365**

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AN ACT
PREVENTING AND PENALIZING THE CRIME OF BULLYING IN ELEMENTARY AND
SECONDARY SCHOOLS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the "Preventing and Penalizing the Crime of Bullying Act of 2025"

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is hereby policy of the State to value the dignity of every human person as we protect their human rights. Furthermore, the Congress shall give highest priority to the enactment of measures that protect and enhance the right of all people to human dignity and reduce social inequalities.

The State likewise recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being, and protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature.

SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. – As used in this Act, the following terms shall be defined:

- a) *Bullying* – refers to any severe or repeated use by one or more person of a verbal, written or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another person that has the effect of actually causing or placing

the latter in reasonable fear of physical, emotional and psychological harm or damage to his dignity; creating a hostile environment for the other person; infringing on the rights of the other person at school, in the internet or any form of electronic media or technology; or materially and substantially disrupting the education process; such as, but not limited to, the following:

- i. Any unwanted physical contact between the bully and the victim like punching, pushing, shoving, kicking, slapping, tickling, headlocks, inflicting excessive pranks, teasing, fighting and the use of available objects as weapons;
 - ii. Any act that causes damage to a victim's psychological and/or emotional well-being;
 - iii. Any slanderous statement or accusation that causes the victim undue emotional distress like directing foul language or profanity at the target, name-calling, tormenting and commenting negatively on victim's looks, clothes and body; and
 - iv. Cyber-bullying is done through any conduct resulting to harassment, intimidation, or humiliation, through the use of other form of technology, such as but not limited to texting, email, instant messaging, chatting, internet, social media, online games, other platforms or formats;
- b) *Gender-based bullying* – refers to any act that humiliates or excludes a person on the basis of perceived or actual sexual orientation and gender identity. Furthermore, any act of retaliation against a person who reports bullying, who provides information during an investigation of bullying, or who is a witness to or has reliable information about bullying is likewise prohibited.
- c) *Social bullying* – refers to any deliberate, repetitive and aggressive social behavior intended to hurt others or to belittle another individual or group.

For purposes of this act, the term "person" shall refer to all natural persons, who is an individual human being capable of assuming obligations and capable of holding rights.

SEC. 4. Penalties – Commission of the acts described under Section 3 hereof shall suffer the following penalties:

- a) In cases wherein a minor who committed the crime acted without discernment shall be exempt from criminal liability but shall be subject to intervention programs to be facilitated with the help of the community, the local government unit, and the Department of Social Welfare and Development. However, while they are exempt from criminal liability, they are not exempt from civil liabilities.

In cases of Civil Liability, the offender must be fined with a penalty of Fifty Thousand Pesos (P50,000) but not more than One Hundred Thousand Pesos (P100,000).

- b) For those who committed the offense at the age of 15 but has not yet reached the legal age of 18 and found to have acted with discernment shall not be exempted from criminal liability.
- c) For those who committed the offenses at the age of majority shall have the imposable penalty of imprisonment for not more than six (6) years, a fine, or both at the discretion of the court.
- d) For those who committed the offenses against Persons with Disability or Persons with Autism shall be penalized in accordance with Republic Act No. 7277 or the Magna Carta of Disabled Persons.

SEC. 5. Diversion Program. – A diversion program can be done at the barangay, police, local social welfare, and development officer or at the prosecutor level. Meanwhile, for offenses with imposable penalty of 6 years and below, the offender may undergo court diversion. If diversion

fails or the case is not qualified, or even if the case is qualified but diversion is not appropriate for the offender, the case will be brought to court for trial.

SEC. 6. Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL). - The Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) may be placed in the community, or if best interest requires, committed to a Bahay Pag-Asa while the case is ongoing. The CICL found guilty of an offense, may undergo a community-based or center-based rehabilitation program.

However, if the CICL did not successfully rehabilitate, they may be required, through a court order, to serve the rest of their sentence upon reaching either the age of majority or 21 years old and above.

SEC. 7. National Bullying Awareness and Prevention Month. – The month of September of every year is hereby declared as the “National Bullying Awareness and Prevention Month” to continuously raise awareness against the act and crime of bullying within the community, and strengthen all efforts initiated by the State towards its goal to eliminate bullying.

SEC. 8. Appropriations. - The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be sourced from the budgets of the concerned agencies under their current General Appropriations Act (GAA). Thereafter, such sums necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in their annual GAA.

For LGUs, the implementation of the program shall be charged against the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) and other internally generated funds of the LGU concerned.

SEC. 9. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – Within six (6) months from the approval of this Act, the Department of Education (DepEd), Department of Justice (DOJ), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), and the Local Government shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act. The implementing rules and regulations (IRR) provided for under this Act shall be reviewed periodically, and revised, if necessary.

SEC. 10. Suppletory Application. – For purposes of this Act, the Revised Penal Code and other applicable laws shall have suppletory application.

SEC. 11. Repealing Clause. - All provisions of existing laws, presidential decrees or issuances, executive orders, letters of instruction, administrative orders, rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 12. Separability Clause. – If any portion of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other provisions not affected thereby.

SEC. 13. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,